



Transit-Accessible Locations for
Health and Social Services

Case Studies Executive Summary

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In order to further our understanding of the decision processes involved in selecting a location for a health and/or social service facility, four examples in Alameda and Contra Costa were selected for detailed description and analysis. These include the relocation of a county social service office, two community-based medical and social service providers, and the planned relocation of a hospital required for seismic and capacity reasons.

These case studies include two facilities located at highly transit-accessible locations – La Clínica at Fruitvale BART in Oakland and the Ed Roberts Campus at the Ashby BART Station in Berkeley, and two locations with more limited transit access – Contra Costa County Social Services field office in Pleasant Hill and a planned Kaiser Permanente medical center in San Leandro. There is also discussion of a future La Clínica facility in the Monument Corridor of Concord. In terms of timing, the case studies range from La Clínica Fruitvale Transit Village, which opened in 2003 after 10 years of planning, to the proposed Kaiser Permanente San Leandro Medical Center, which is planned for a 2013-15 completion.

Preparing the case studies made it clear that finding transit-accessible locations in a timely manner is not an easy task, and siting compromises are often required to implement a project. Creating a multi-service center at a highly transit-accessible location, such as the Ed Roberts Campus at the Ashby BART Station, took many years for planning, deal making, and fund raising. Creating the Fruitvale Transit Village, which contains La Clínica, likewise took years of multi-agency negotiations and fund raising. Using transit-oriented development (TOD) funding, which assists intensive development around major transit hubs for a medical or social service facility, is also difficult; most TOD projects contain either exclusively residential or a mix of residential and commercial uses.

County social service agencies use field offices to bring their services closer to their clientele. They generally locate in single tenant rental buildings as landlords and other tenants do not find them to be desirable co-tenants because of their volume of clientele. Although transit access is cited as a screening criterion, this does not necessarily imply a high level of transit access such as is found near BART stations that are served by multiple bus routes. Although rent levels are often higher adjacent to BART stations, any rent differential is not a significant factor when measured in relation to all agency operating costs. Several agencies and non-profits confirmed that occupancy costs amount to approximately 2-3% of all operating costs. The ideal building often does not exist near BART stations, and arranging for construction of the ideally located building would take three or more years extra compared to limiting a

search to those buildings that would be available for occupancy within six months to a year. Public agency or other non-profit tenants are sometimes discouraged from locating in redevelopment areas, as they are exempt from contributing to the property tax revenues that are needed to provide redevelopment tax increment financing.

Finally, large hospitals and medical centers require large sites, ideally more than 20 acres. Finding such sites today implies an outlying location or brownfield industrial site. These sites generally do not have excellent transit access, and in an economic climate in which transit service is subject to cancellation, conditions of approval that require the applicant to provide privately financed shuttle services to transit hubs may be the best solution.

Following are descriptions and summaries of lessons learned from the individual case studies.

1. Contra Costa Employment and Human Services Department: Co-Location of Workforce Services, Children and Family Services, and Administrative Units: 300-400-500 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill

Introduction

Contra Costa County Employment and Human Services Department (EHSD) provides a variety of social service functions for the county. Like many county governmental functions, it is headquartered in Martinez but has field offices in western, central, and eastern portions of the county to improve community access to its services. While some functions involve staff visiting clients, many clients visit the field offices to apply for services. Services are generally provided between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on weekdays. Several years ago, the Central County field offices for several functions were relocated from suburban Martinez to Pleasant Hill.

400 Ellinwood Way, Pleasant Hill, Contra Costa County Workforce Services Office



Lessons Learned

- Because of grant funding formulas that California uses to support County employment and human services, county government favors leasing rather than owning offices used for such purposes.
- The volume of client visits and concerns about occasional incidents between clients or between clients and staff result in the County maintaining deputy sheriffs or other security personnel in building lobbies. This encourages the use of single occupant leases rather than renting space in multi-tenant buildings.
- Even in an office market area such as central Contra Costa County, which has considerable modern office space, there are few choices of sufficient size available in single tenant buildings at any given time.
- The County did not locate governmental offices at the Contra Costa Centre Redevelopment Area adjacent to the Pleasant Hill BART Station because the tax increment financing utilized for public improvements discourages the use of redevelopment land for non-property tax producing governmental offices.
- Central Contra Costa County does not have a large transit-dependent population compared to other areas in West County and most of Alameda County, but limited bus service is available to the County Employment and Human Services at Ellinwood in Pleasant Hill. This service level is better than at the prior office location on Muir Road in Martinez.
- Office rental rates adjacent to BART Stations (currently \$2.40 to \$2.70 per square foot per month at prime sites), which also have the highest frequency and/or number of bus routes, may be \$.50 to \$1.00 per square foot higher per month

than sites with more limited transit service. When considering all operating costs including employee wages and benefits, utilities, supplies, etc., paying such higher rent may increase agency operating costs by 1-3% compared to rent levels at sites less well served by transit.

- Ensuring that county employment and human services offices are in the most transit-accessible locations within the desired market area would require planning three years or longer in advance in order to ensure that appropriate space is built.

2. La Clínica de La Raza Medical and Dental Services - East Oakland and "Monument Corridor" Concord

Introduction

This case study details the history and locational choices made by La Clínica de La Raza, which is a non-profit community-based organization. Since its beginnings as a single storefront free clinic operation in Oakland in 1971, La Clínica has grown into a provider of primary health care and other services, with 25 sites spread across Alameda, Contra Costa and Solano Counties

La Clínica's website provides directions to each of its facilities, and utilizes the 511.org site to provide directions via bus and Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART), including schedules. Examination of the websites of many Alameda and Contra Costa County public agencies and non-profits providing medical and social services revealed that this was a unique approach to providing transit-oriented directions.

La Clínica Oakland at Fruitvale Transit Village



Lessons Learned

- Community-based organizations are taking a more substantial role in the delivery of health care, funded directly by federal grants as well as agreements and funding from counties and other medical providers. From our outreach interviews, it appears that a significant proportion of their clientele are transit-dependent. Partnerships can be an effective tool for overcoming barriers posed by the expense and complexity of certain projects. The Fruitvale Transit Village survived various legal, financial, and regulatory challenges in large part because of the leadership of the Unity Council and the willingness of key players like BART and the City of Oakland to actively participate in the project.
- BART-proximate sites are valuable for health care and social service facilities because they serve as hubs for bus service as well, thus representing the most transit-accessible sites for clients who lack auto access. As with other multi-service centers, assembling the coalition and making the deal inflates the cost of occupancy for the agencies involved, but provides a benefit to the community and specifically the clientele that is difficult to quantify. As calculated previously, the incremental space occupancy costs, while seeming substantial, are generally not significant when measured against the total cost of operating the agency.
- As found in other cases, there are few choices available for siting medical clinics, particularly when expansion or modification of existing facilities is precluded by the necessity to continue delivery of services while expanding. Unless a very long timeline is feasible, it is difficult to locate clinics at sites that receive excellent transit service.

3. The Ed Roberts Campus – Adeline and Woolsey – Ashby BART Station

Introduction

The Ed Roberts Campus is a multi-service center for many non-profit social service agencies that are focused on the disabled community. The Center for Independent Living (CIL) was founded in Berkeley and other affiliated agencies have been created over time to serve the large disabled community that has located in the community.

The Ed Roberts Campus includes the following seven partner agencies:

- Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program (BORP)
- Center for Accessible Technology (CforAT)
- Center for Independent Living (CIL)
- Computer Technologies Program (CTP)
- Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund (DREDF)
- Through the Looking Glass (TLG)
- World Institute on Disability (WID)

Lessons Learned

- A unique long-term perspective and focus on the importance of transit marks the decision process involved in siting and developing the Ed Roberts Campus.
- Incredible patience and perseverance is required to develop a multi-service center, particularly on a complex public agency-owned parcel.
- Assembling a funding package for an innovative collaboration of non-profits is very difficult, and grants for transit-oriented development are normally focused on residential/commercial projects.
- Despite its focus on a transportation disadvantaged community and location at a site with “excellent” BART access and good bus access, overcoming neighbor concerns about potential parking impacts mandated that considerable parking be provided.
- Even before the seven partner agencies are co-located, working together on design and permitting provided benefits in creation of joint programs and grants.
- Developing a multi-service center at a BART Station was not an inexpensive process, and creating the Ed Roberts Campus with “excellent transit access” had a premium cost. Its uniqueness and level of community support helped attract grant financing that might not have been generally available.
- Starting from scratch also allowed utilizing universal design features for the disabled community that would not have been available in existing leased space.

4. Kaiser Permanente San Leandro Medical Center

Introduction

This case study details the history and locational choices made by Kaiser Permanente in planning for a new medical center in San Leandro, scheduled to replace an older hospital in Hayward.

Kaiser Permanente is currently working with the City of San Leandro on developing a 63-acre parcel of property, formerly the site of an Albertson's distribution center, located off Marina Boulevard, just west of Interstate 880. Kaiser intends to develop roughly half of the property into a state-of-the-art medical facility with the remainder of the property slated for a retail center.

Lessons Learned

- Like other hospitals, Kaiser Permanente needs to replace older facilities that do not meet current seismic standards. As a very large medical organization, Kaiser Permanente has a 10-hospital construction program in Northern California. With the exception of urban hospitals with clearly constrained sites, such as Oakland and San Francisco, Kaiser Permanente has established a standard hospital template that it uses whenever possible. This results in facility standardization that is beneficial and cost effective. Hospital design review by the state Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD) is accomplished in half the time by using an approved hospital template.
- The standard Kaiser Permanente medical center design requires a minimum 25-35 acre site in order to provide for a hospital building, a medical office building, central utility plant, and parking, in addition to sufficient space to expand any of these as required. Besides the San Leandro medical center, the new Antioch facility has a similar configuration.
- Because of high numbers of daily trips and relatively large catchment areas, Kaiser Permanente seeks sites close to freeways and/or major arterial routes. Visibility can help attract market share and reduce stress among patients seeking care.
- Most Kaiser Permanente medical facilities are served by fixed route transit as well as special shuttle services to link to BART stations or other significant transit centers where proximate.
- A free Kaiser Permanente shuttle service between the hospital and San Leandro BART Station mandated to reduce single occupant auto usage will offer a more attractive linkage to the regional transit network than that provided by regular bus service.
- With the exception of San Francisco and Oakland, the vast majority of staff and clients use automobiles to access Kaiser Permanente medical centers.